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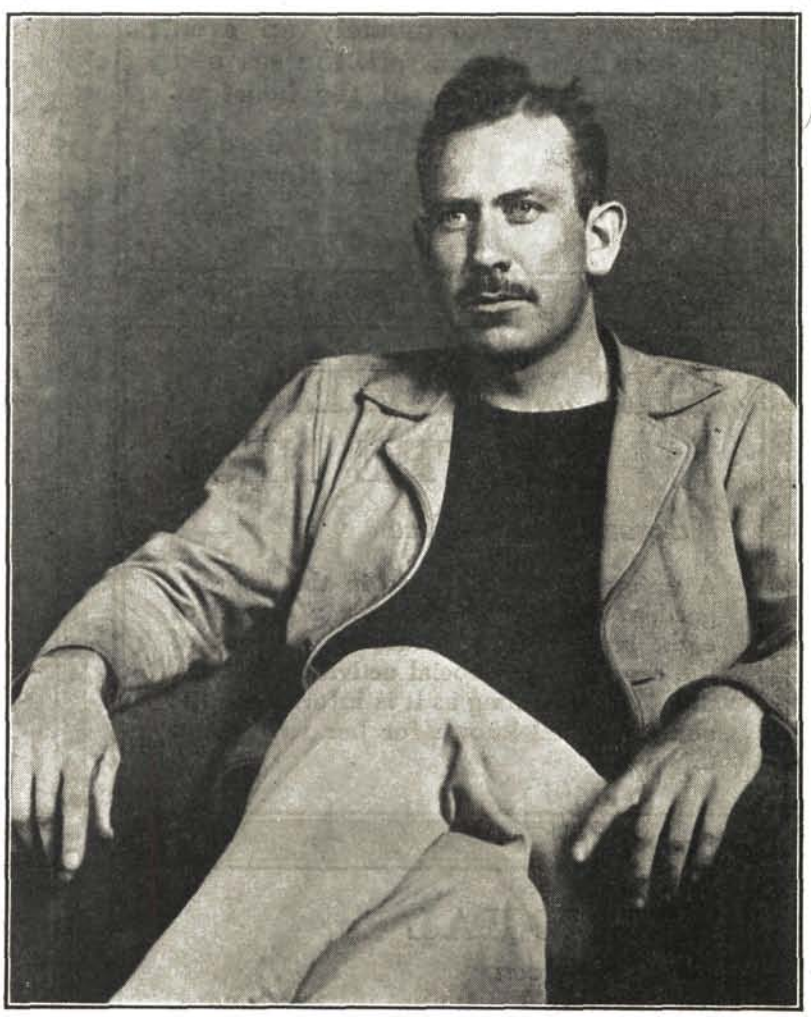

JOHN STEINBECK

"The unique quality of 'The Grapes of Wrath' . . . is an understanding of courage — courage seen with humor and bitterness and without a trace of sentimentality" . . .

(See page 3)

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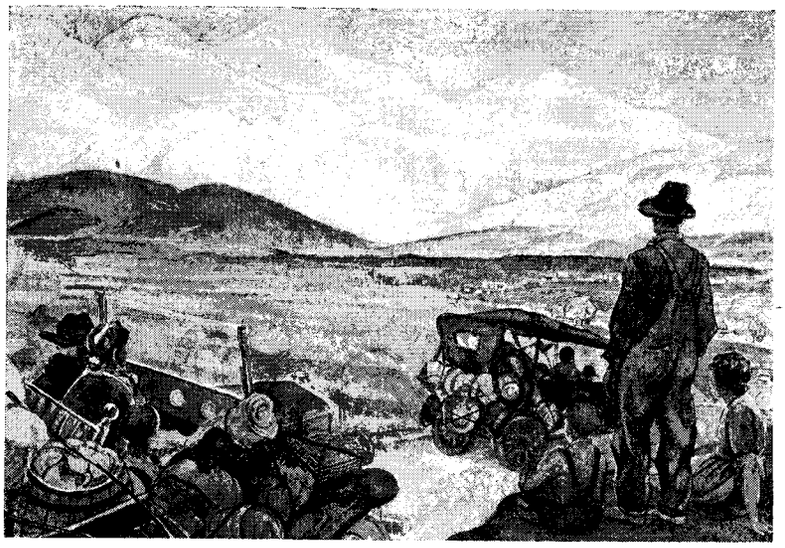
Steinbeck's Uncovered Wagon*

BY GEORGE STEVENS



"People with no home but the road, no prospects but hope, no resources but courage . . ." (From the jacket of "The Grapes of Wrath.")

IT is exciting to watch the steady unfolding of a real writer's talent, to follow his development from promise to achievement, with the sense that he knows what he wants and knows what he is doing. It is particularly exciting because it is rare. Van Wyck Brooks pointed out long ago that the blighted career, the unfulfilled promise, is the rule in American writing, and his statement turned out to be as accurate in prophecy as in diagnosis. Writers who produced one or two good books; writers who abandoned literature to go to Hollywood, or to go to Spain, or to write plays, or to attend meetings, or simply to retire on their earnings; writers who exhausted their resources and kept doing the same book over and over—one after another they have left their overexcitable discoverers holding the bag: a bag full of words like "genius" and "masterpiece," to be taken three times a day, with meals.

Among the novelists of his generation, the most notable exception to this state of things is John Steinbeck. He has never yet flashed in the pan. According to his official biographer (Joseph H. Jackson in the *S.R.L.*, September 25, 1937), Steinbeck tore up the manuscripts of his first two novels, and retired the third. Since his first published book, "The Cup of Gold," each successive one has revealed a new facet of his ability. "Tortilla Flat" was the humorous and sympathetic story of some attractive and disreputable Mexicans. "In Dubious Battle" was a serious labor novel, remarkable of its kind in presenting the issues in terms of animate characters, who had the vitality to take the story over for themselves. "Of Mice and Men" was a miniature tragedy which lost none of its effectiveness for being written with an eye on the stage, which was just as poignant whether you took it straight or symbolically. Different as these novels are (and Steinbeck's variety is further manifested in the stories in "The Long Valley"), there has been a constancy of flavor which is impossible to define: something deeper than the "personality" of the author, which never intrudes; something more impalpable than "ideas"; something in the style, but in a style of which one is almost never conscious.

For these reasons Steinbeck's reputation is unique. All our reviewers, and such critics as we have among us, are pretty consciously in the "watch Steinbeck" movement. If it is turning into a bandwagon, that is not Steinbeck's fault. He has already survived some fairly indiscriminate adulation. His activities, outside of writing novels, have managed to remain his own affairs, to a remarkable degree in the great American goldfish bowl; and nothing has interfered with his serious production. The lively curiosity which Steinbeck has inspired is a legitimate curiosity about his work. Because of his variety, nobody can put him in a pigeon-hole; nobody has been able to say, "Steinbeck has done it again," but rather, "What is Steinbeck going to do next?" Since it became known that Steinbeck had a new novel for spring publication, and that it was by far his longest and most ambitious production to date, it is safe to say (for whatever it may mean) that no other book on the current lists has been so eagerly looked forward to by the reviewers.

"The Grapes of Wrath" is worth it, worth all the talk, all the anticipation, all the enthusiasm. Here is the epitome of everything Steinbeck has so far given us. It has the humor and earthiness of "Tortilla Flat," the social consciousness of "In Dubious Battle," the passionate concern for the homeless and uprooted which made "Of Mice and Men" memorable. These elements, together with a narrative that moves with excitement for its own sake, are not mixed but fused, to produce the unique quality of "The Grapes of Wrath." That quality is an understanding of courage—courage seen with humor and bitterness and without a trace of sentimentality; courage that exists as the last affirmation of human dignity. To convey that understanding with passionate conviction, in human terms and also in terms of mature intelligence, so that we respond integrally and without reservation, is a very considerable thing for a novel to do. That is what "The Grapes of Wrath" does. It is by no means perfect, but possibly its faults (one of which is egregious) are a measure of its worth, in that it triumphantly lives them down.

"The Grapes of Wrath" is the story of the new American nomads, of the migrant farmers who have lost their few acres in the Oklahoma dust bowl to the onward march of tractors and foreclosures. It is in particular the story of one family, the Joads from a farm near Sallisaw. You have seen them going west through Texas and New Mexico on Route 66, or you have seen them in Resettlement Administration photographs: three generations in a second-hand truck, piled high with everything they own. Car after car, from Arkansas to California; people with no home but the road, no prospects but hope, no resources but courage: the thirty-niners in their uncovered wagons.

With this material Steinbeck has done what, according to at least one theory, cannot be done: he has made a living novel out of the news in the paper, out of contemporary social conditions. In

Next Week

THE ODYSSEY OF AN AMERICAN FAMILY
By HALL ROOSEVELT and S. D. McCOY
Reviewed by William Allen White

AMERICAN MEDICINE MOBILIZES
By JAMES RORTY
Reviewed by Mabel S. Ulrich, M.D.

* *THE GRAPES OF WRATH. By John Steinbeck. New York: The Viking Press.* 1939. $2.75.

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"Land of the Free," Archibald MacLeish wrote a sound track to the Resettlement Administration's documentary stills. He looked at the pictures of the plowed-under farmers and wrote a poet's abstract statement, pared down to gaunt monosyllables, of a seemingly insoluble problem. Steinbeck has looked at the Oklahoma farmers themselves—the "Okies" in Salinas County, California, driven from camp to camp, finding no work, not allowed to settle. What he has written about them is a narrative: colorful, dramatic, subtle, coarse, comic, and tragic. For "The Grapes of Wrath" is not a social novel like most social novels. It is instead what a social novel ought to be. When you read it, you are in contact not with arguments, but with people.

I just said that Steinbeck has seen these people, which is a presumption, but is supported by the dedication: "To Carol, who willed it. To Tom, who lived it." Tom Joad comes out of State Prison on parole (he had killed a man in self-defense, and has nothing on his conscience) just in time to join his family, who had been forced off the land and were heading west, lured by rumors of a land of plenty where workers were wanted on the farms. Each of the Joads is alive and convincing: Pa and Ma, practical, wise with the tenant farmers' knowledge of the underside of life, accepting what came and making the best of it; Grampa, an obscene old goat, full of gusto, always throwing his hip out of joint when he laughed; Uncle John, who had to drink when his memories became unbearable; Casy, the preacher, who saw through and beyond his backwoods evangelism; Tom's younger brothers and sisters, Noah not quite right in the head, Rose of Sharon expecting a baby. A family out of "Tobacco Road"; but although Steinbeck never asks us to sympathize with them, although he makes them as funny as they are pitiful, they are human beings, not degenerates or freaks.

The laughter subsides as the uncovered wagon goes west; the comedy gives way to tragedy. Two of the family are left in unmarked graves along the roadside; and one burial scene is handled with the utmost skill and effectiveness. On to California and to disillusion, with the last of the money giving out, with rumors of work up the road (but no men wanted when they get there), with the California Gestapo burning the Okie's camps, arresting objectors as "dangerous reds," riding herd on those who do get work in the orchards at starvation wages. The Joads find a temporary haven in a government camp, and temporary work in a peach orchard, but always they have to move on—until Tom gets into trouble again, and Rose of Sharon's baby is born. From all their wanderings the Joads learn one thing: that the only people who will help them are others as down and out as themselves. It is out of this comradeship among the hopeless that courage is kept alive—the courage that is their last possession. In its affirmation of man's courage in desperation lie the human significance and value of "The Grapes of Wrath."

Others will see in it a different and more immediately sociological value. Unquestionably "The Grapes of Wrath" states the problem of the southwestern tenant farmer in a form that will bring it home to the imaginations of thousands who have hitherto looked on it with comparative unconcern. Unquestionably, also, Steinbeck sees his material both as a narrative and as a condition calling for action. At regular intervals in the book he inserts general chapters stating the problem in terms of pure non-fiction. For my own part, I found these chapters at best superfluous, occasionally sententious, and in one instance downright bad (this is a very windy passage indeed, in which the author coins the word "Manself," which I hope no one will ever use again). It is not these chapters, but the story of the Joads, that makes you want to do something about the migratory tenant farmers.

There remain one warning and one major criticism. It is only fair to say that there are conservative readers whom the language used by the Joad family will offend. In my opinion, all the dialogue is necessary and right; Steinbeck's ear is perfect, and he lets the Joads talk with uninhibited coarseness. I think this is vital in a serious book like "The Grapes of Wrath," and that it would be obscene to write the dialogue otherwise; but I realize that some readers will feel differently.

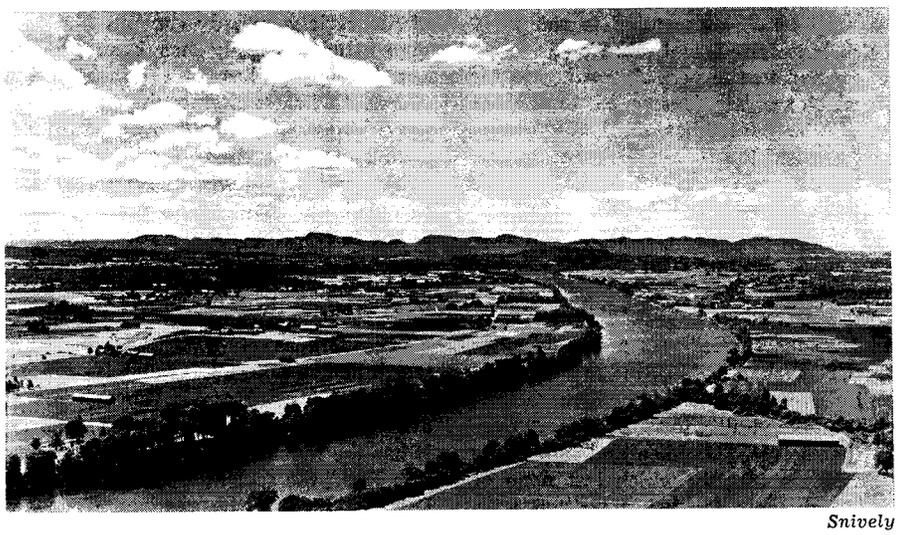
As for the criticism—a point on which another group of readers will disagree—I think that the last scene of the novel is bathos. It describes a physically possible but highly unusual event which even if palatable would be unconvincing; and even if Steinbeck had made it convincing, he would have added nothing to the story. The fact is that the story has no ending. We are left without knowing what happens to the characters. That is a necessary condition of writing about the immediate situation of the tenant farmers' odyssey, and we could put up with the absence of a satisfactory ending. But the final episode in the book seems to me a trick to jar the reader out of the realization that the story really does not end. It takes away a little of the effectiveness, and there will be many readers to wish Steinbeck hadn't done it.

But "The Grapes of Wrath" is good enough to live down more than this. Mrs. Roosevelt spoke recently of the need for a novelist who can interpret what is going on in this country among the kind of people of whom book readers in general know little—people like the Joads. John Steinbeck is the novelist. He knows what the country is doing to the Joads, and what goes on in their minds and emotions.

The Length of New England

LIFE ALONG THE CONNECTICUT RIVER. With an Introduction by Charles Crane. Brattleboro, Vermont: Stephen Daye Press. 1939. $3.75.

THIS is a book of interesting and well selected photographs by Lewis Browne, Ralph Day, Newell Green, Cortlandt Luce, Jr., and R. D. and M. E. Snively of one of the most beautiful and varied river valleys in the United States. Marion Hooper has supplied textual explanation of these excellent pictures. Mr. Crane's informal introduction gives sufficient historical background and personal detail. It is a particularly good book for anyone who has yearnings to settle in the New England country.



Snively

The Connecticut River near Northampton, Mass., with the Holyoke Range in the background.

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Frémont and the Frontier

FRÉMONT: PATHMARKER OF THE WEST. By Allan Nevins. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co. 1939. $5.

Reviewed by E. DOUGLAS BRANCH

FRÉMONT the indomitable, husband and lover, the explorer and discoverer, gallantly convex against the winds of a topmost crag of the West while the pennons of his *Excelsior* whip into the memory of posterity: the cinema will discover him yet, and de-mille his fourth expedition with horrifying inaccuracy.

A two-volume life of Frémont by Mr. Nevins was published in 1927. It was over-priced, its technicalia would have disgraced a novice in the printing craft, it was "embellished" into the similitude of an ideal Christmas gift for a whimsical uncle; but the auctorial contribution made it a good book. With Cardinal Goodwin's book on Frémont (written at the same time, but published three years later) as carminative for Nevins's truculently defensive admiration for his hero, the 1927 work was a salutary esculent for one's mental munching. (Nevins calls the Goodwin interpretation "studiously hostile"; really it was better than that.) 1927 was, as we like to deceive ourselves, not very long ago. And here is an expanded "Frémont" by the same author, its preface beginning "This volume is essentially a new life of John Charles Frémont." Here, not in the fecundity of past errata but in the care of revision, after assimilation of a number of monographs published since 1927, emerges the definitive life of Frémont.

Not quite that, of course. Of a character so compounded of adventurousness, ardor, ambition, and more than a soupçon of if-you-don't-like-it-lump-it, there will never be even a next-to-last word. (As with Aaron Burr.) This volume is distinctive against its overweight predecessor particularly in the questions it leaves unanswered. How, as Nevins inquires, could the man who sometimes succeeded so dazzlingly at other times fail so dismally? How can one account for his dizzy alternations of triumph and disaster? Sometimes he snatched victory from the direst perils; sometimes fortune bore him her amplest gifts on a golden salver; as often he opened Pandora's box prematurely, or knocked off the cone of fame's beehive at precisely the moment not to garner honey. The author's preface cites about a dozen as yet unsolved questions in Frémont's career; the number could almost be doubled. Clio minces amongst the swords of indecision; and the more Clio she. This is history, not Ludwig. And it is nearly bedrock. If it is not as substantial as Nevins's "Cleveland," it is because Frémont's strange personality exfoliates into conjecture. Himself sometimes baffled, research notwithstanding, by the erraticisms of Frémont, Nevins wistfully bids us remember "the strange mixture of blood which flowed in his veins," that he had come into the world in a boarding house, had been suckled in a carriage, traveling the dusty roads between the prospective customers for his father's pastels; and in life and thought was a part of the changing panorama of the frontier.

Mr. Nevins has been graceful toward Frémont. He has bought the rights to the 1927 biography—or rather its ghost, since that edition is long out of print—and committed an affectionate filicide, so that comparison is irrelevant. He has rewritten with a beguiling raciness. There is a bit of "in fancy we can picture the baby boy," "the smiling lap of springtime California," "could he have foreseen," verbal excrescences which would

Frémont in 1850

have withered off had the manuscript been kept for a decade or so in the murk of a scholar's closet (let us rejoice that *this* scholar is communicative); and there are many passages of fascinatingly vivid writing. The biography is gusseted by orientative paragraphs which need no brush to make the West colorful, no cinematography to lend the characters motion. Particularly impressive are the chapters concerning the Bear Flag revolt, wherein Nevins has pieced from document and surmise the first genuinely convincing account of that quixotic junket.

Frémont's one great and tangible contribution to American life, the tower of achievement from which Nevins scrapes the thinnest patina of dubiety, was his geographical work. His fur-questing predecessors were unable (and for that matter scarcely interested) to map trail, path, and waterway—to advertise the highways of the West. This pioneering work, so important an arrow toward the objective of "Manifest Destiny," was Frémont's. His ineptness as commander in the Civil War may be forgiven; the pitch upon his palms from the hawking abroad of the freshly printed railway bonds clings somewhat even after Nevins's strenuous scrubbing. As Nevins puts it, "Where else can we find a career so packed with adventure and the romance of contrast; where else one which calls up so many images of a more spacious and brightly colored age?"

E. Douglas Branch is professor of history at the University of Pittsburgh.

Pressure to Fight

BLOOD IS CHEAPER THAN WATER: The Prudent American's Guide to Peace and War. By Quincy Howe. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1939. $2.

Reviewed by DAVID H. POPPER

LIKE its predecessor, "England Expects Every American to Do His Duty," this book will be furiously denounced and warmly praised by those who fall within the broad sweep of its thesis. Marshaling a select company of officials, financial leaders, publicists, and organizations, Mr. Howe classifies them —and us, their followers and critics—in two vast groups of opinion, with appropriate subcategories. An irrepressible conflict cutting across political alignments has, it appears, broken out between the war party and the peace party in this country. The former specialize in "warmed-over Wilsonian idealism, the snob appeal of the British aristocracy, the popular appeal of anti-Fascism, and the commercial appeal of business interest to promote a program of American expansion." The peace group, quondam isolationists, plumbs the emotional depths of anti-foreign prejudice, simon-pure pacifism, and virulent American chauvinism to win support. But all these rallying points are the political mythology of two great movements, not their essence. Slogans aside, the issue lies between those who believe that the United States should take part in the next general war and those who believe it should remain neutral.

With a nostalgic review of the isolationist doctrines he once supported, Mr. Howe reluctantly admits that the war party (unfortunate term!) now commands the field. With support stretching from financial interests on the Right to the New Deal, religious leaders and militant labor on the Left, it is better organized, better supported, better led. The international situation reinforces its doctrine; this nation, having abjured self-sufficiency, has become a world power which cannot fail to be vitally concerned when the almost inevitable war comes over the

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horizon. We shall fight, for the peace party has little to offer as an alternative.

It is important, however, that we fight for the proper objective. Liberals and idealists who are concerned with the triumph of democracy and what Secretary Hull calls "orderly processes" would have us preserve the *status quo* all over the world or embark on another muddle-headed crusade in the most approved 1917 style. But the sound business interests which support the New Deal foreign policy have a purpose far more suitable to the exigencies of the occasion. They would have the country embark on a frank imperialistic policy in Latin America and the Far East—a course which might help solve the dilemma of a stagnant economy here at home and which would not ruin the country by unrestricted warfare to save the British and French imperial realms. We fight for empire in any case; we ought to fight for our own rather than any one else's.

Spiritedly, and with malice aforethought, Mr. Howe has made a notable addition to our current pamphleteering literature. His pages bristle with debatable assertions, which will doubtless be challenged by those publicists whom he sometimes neatly deflates. His campaign against the loose thinking of those who imagine they are engaged in saving democracy would be more effective if he applied the check rein of sound common sense to his own rampant Anglophobia. And his desire to limit American objectives in a world war seems rather chimerical. War, like the governments which conduct it, is totalitarian. If the United States is to gain the safety of the victor, it must crush the enemy's will to resist, wherever and however it can. This means another crusade, with incalculable consequences. But the hazards, like the stakes, of imperial adventure are enormous.

Corcoran, Cohen & Co.

MEN AROUND THE PRESIDENT. By Joseph Alsop and Robert Kintner. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1939. $1.50.

Reviewed by DUNCAN AIKMAN

MESSRS. ALSOP and KINTNER are heralds of a new brand of punditry in Washington commentators. Their indignations are less flatulent than those of Messrs. Frank Kent and Mark Sullivan. Their tongues are deeper in their cheeks than those of the shining fauns of yesteryear, Bob Allen, Ray Tucker, the now Hearst-hamstrung Paul Mallon, who upset the Hoover epoch with horse-laughs out of *Time* Magazine and the *American Mercury* of the Menckenian Golden Day.

The Alsop-Kintner team performs a basically similar operation more subtly. Their thesis is that a group of ardent intellectuals in the administration, headed by Tommy Corcoran and Ben Cohen and staffed at the top by Secretaries Ickes and Hopkins, Solicitor General Robert Jackson, recently promoted Associate Justice Douglas, and Economists Leon Henderson, Isador Lubin, and Lauchlin Currie, unduly control the Roosevelt policies.

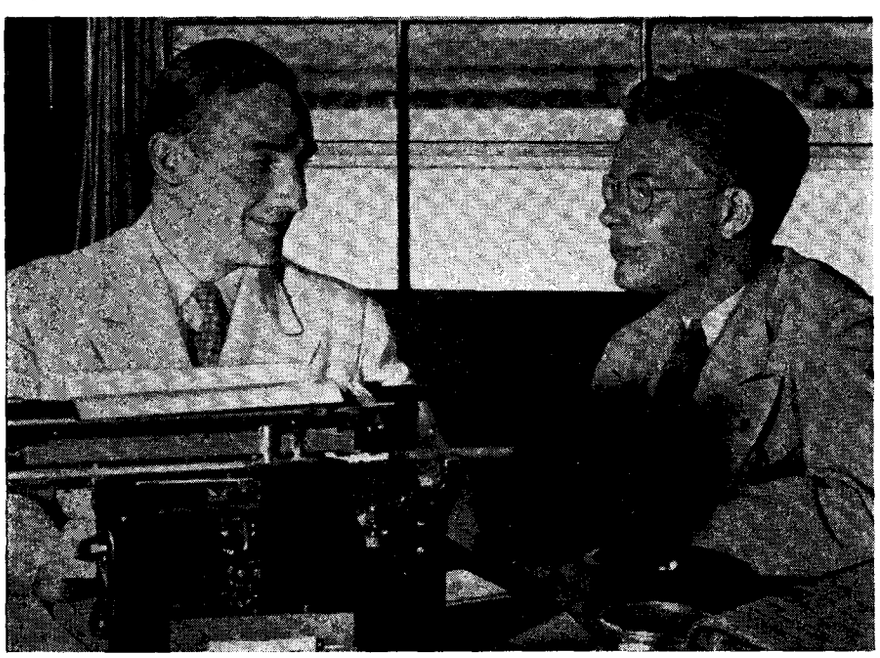
The authors painstakingly mute all demonstrations in the nature of open jeering or captious generalities. Their attitude, in fact, suggests *The Saturday Evening Post* at its leaning-backwardest. Their subjects, they admit, have merits. The "New Dealers"—so-called to distinguish them from the long dispersed cell of Moley-Tugwell "brain trusters"—work heroically long hours in a white heat of honest enthusiasm. They are passionately loyal to their program and the President. They are the ablest group of bill-drafters and administrative technicians ever assembled in Washington. That the New Deal spending epic has been accomplished with an almost irreducible minimum of graft taint is due to their extraordinary rectitude. They are not Marxists, but old-fashioned "trust busters" dating back to the tradition of the moral Bull Moosers.

They would, prescribe the commentators, if confined to some pleasant cattery for political neuters like the British civil service, make almost ideal public officers. What irks Messrs. Alsop and Kintner is that the New Dealers are, largely as a result of the President's personal selection based on his predilections in politics, the ruling advisers to the White House on policy, constituting "a palace junta." On this point—in spite of the compliments—the indictment seldom slackens.

The New Dealers, their interpreters maintain, have been throughout the administration the major force influencing the President to keep on spending the best people's money on the WPA riffraff created by the best people's business ineptitude. New Dealers, during the past twelvemonth, have guided the President around the fast political corners from alliance with big business to "trust busting"; from budget balancing, in last spring's depression, to bigger and better spending; from conciliation of the practical politicians to last summer's "purges."

The New Dealers are held together as a pressure bloc for what they are after by Mr. Corcoran's genius for "gang"—the Alsop-Kintner choice of the lightly depreciative epithet is unfailingly adept—leadership. They have the ear of the President, partly because their duties as administrative technicians bring them in close contact, but mainly because he prefers their stimulating company to that of those more representative but primitive statesmen, the practical politicians. And because they are omnipresent, united in what they want, and the President catches his hottest fires from intelligent conversation, they control the presidential programs.

But always on the New Dealers' idea-crammed heads rains down the chilly patter of delicately belittling phrases. They are the "administrative technicians . . . assuming responsibilities for the social welfare of the individual, expending billions for his health and comfort, firmly regulating his business doings." They have conducted an "intellectual march on Washington," their days are "taut with emotion, rich in purpose." They are uplifted unquestionably by "a



Joseph Alsop and Robert Kintner

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deep respect for things of the mind," but the Alsop-Kintner rhetoric knows how to say it with a leer.

The President loves them, but for the curiously belittling reason that he "was never a popular fellow. . . . At school and college, and afterwards," the commentators faintly damn him, "he never, never got along well with the mass of men with whom his fortune and education would naturally have thrown him." Now think of a man being President of the United States who couldn't have fun with Nelson Aldrich.

Gorki's Evolution

A BOOK OF SHORT STORIES. By Maxim Gorki. Edited by Avrahm Yarmolinsky and Baroness Moura Budberg. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1939. $3.

Reviewed by PAUL ROSENFELD

OLD enthusiasms for Gorki's work will be revived by this volume and fresh ones kindled by it. Together with certain tales and stories like "Chelkash," "Creatures That Once Were Men," and "Twenty-Six Men and a Girl," which won Gorki his first renown, this fine collection includes six masterly later stories never hitherto translated into English; and the entire fifteen exhibit the distinct artistic and spiritual evolution of this fundamentally simple-hearted and deeply emotional man. Clearly we perceive that the bitter Gorki who discovered the "lower depths" of Russian society and vividly portrayed vagabonds and city proletarians, from the first surpassed the mere depictors of wretched milieus inspired by fierce social concern. Fierce social concern always possessed Gorki, but it was flanked by a broad streak of poetry. A poetic realist, his unvarnished symbols, like Sherwood Anderson's, represent a serene vision of human values.

Fleeting traits, gestures, words revealed the secret depths to him. And what they revealed, and what he transmitted—for he had the magic art of turning small but characteristic phenomena into large, typical ones—was much of the intrinsic human being, invariable whether its covering was furs or rags; and something of the spirit of toughness and strength which, Russian that he was, Gorki vastly admired; but most of all, as Aldous Huxley remarks in his arresting Foreword, "a reality underneath the squalor, misery, and cruelty of human life which would reveal itself as beautiful and good if only men would take the trouble to uncover it." And as his gripping art grew subtler and more economical, his belief in life grew even broader. Such later stories—unfamiliar and lovely—as "Birth of a Man," "Going Home," and "The Hermit" express a warm, wellnigh pagan reconciliation with nature quite at variance with the Tolstoyan, almost harsh asceticism of Gorki's early manhood.

Dr. Fearn in an improvised office in Shanghai

Woman Doctor in China

MY DAYS OF STRENGTH. By Anne Walter Fearn, M.D. New York: Harper & Bros. 1939. $3.

Reviewed by VICTOR G. HEISER, M.D.

IN a chatty, conversational style Anne Walter Fearn tells of her forty years' experience as a woman doctor in China, within and without the missionary fold. At the time she began her career, woman's entrance into medicine was looked upon as a bold and daring thing. She graduated at the Women's Medical College in Philadelphia in the early years of its existence, and quite by accident found herself taking over the contract of another woman doctor who was unable to go to China to serve as physician in the Soochow Hospital. Dr. Fearn was supposed to go for only a year and then return to the United States for her internship, but delay after delay occurred. In the meantime she had married John Burrus Fearn, a handsome young missionary doctor from Jackson, Mississippi, who had been born only a few miles from her own birthplace; and she spent the rest of her life in China. She writes of her marriage in a most frank manner. Her husband's insistence that religious exercises must take precedence over emergency surgical operations finally brought to an end their joint religious life, but they lived together throughout the years, both continuing in separate and independent fields of medicine.

Dr. Fearn tells of her early struggles for women's rights in China and the great progress that was made. She goes into considerable detail in giving the history of the American Women's Club in Shanghai and its outstanding accomplishments. She is probably happiest in describing her purchase, on a shoe-string, of a building in which to start a hospital of her own, and she deals extensively with the success of her medical efforts in that institution. Much of her medical work in China was under missionary auspices, but she makes it plain that religion had very little part in her life and that she was inspired almost entirely by scientific zeal to give suffering humanity in China the benefit of modern Western medicine.

In addition to the strictly medical part of the book Dr. Fearn gives a rapid-fire history and brief account of China's various revolutions while she was there and the hardships suffered some years ago by the people during the period when such desperate efforts were made to expel foreigners. All in all she is in full sympathy with the Chinese, and after having retired and settled down to make her home in this country, she found the urge to return to China so strong that she is again in Shanghai, where even with failing strength she is continuing her efforts in charitable fields.

All inhibitions are removed in the descriptions of everything from her girlhood love affairs to mixed bathing in Japan and her own operation for rejuvenation. The book is filled with amusing stories of China, most of which are familiar to all foreigners who have lived there, and which should prove fascinating to readers in other lands. Those who choose medicine as a career are sure of having thrilling experiences if they practise in far-away countries.

Dr. Victor G. Heiser is the author of "An American Doctor's Odyssey." His new book, "You're the Doctor," is to be published soon.

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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Poet Out in the Open

PARADOX has always played a puzzling part in human existence. At present both domestic and international affairs bristle with paradox. The humbled turn tyrants. The statesmen of democracy muddle the best interests of civilization. Those are only two cheery little paradoxes of our own time. The world is full of loud-speaker voices either reporting hodiernal paradox or recommending paradoxical courses. There seems to be little humane logic left to mankind.

Being what is called "a poet" also appears as a paradox in the world of today. At least, many people are engaged, more or less violently, in pointing that out. And yet, any imagined civilization without poetry is but another paradox—even though Plato did ban poets from his Republic. The Republic of Plato was always too cut and dried. One so-called poet of the day, however, is perplexed by a particular paradoxical development of his own. Suppose we present his case.

There was a time—actually!—in which it was not necessary closely to follow swift-moving world events in the daily papers. Events were not moving swiftly. The world was comparatively at peace. There was no such thing as war-in-the-air. There was a fair amount of prosperity and only an average amount of unemployment. In that golden age this poet grew up and decided to cultivate words and phrases in his little garden. He wrote at leisure, often in a library, with some chance of contemplating eternity—the world not too much with him. He aspired to the sagacity possessed by the ancient masters of his craft. Still in his twenties, with his first book published, he encountered one who exclaimed at that time, "Why, I thought you had a long, white beard!" So ancient, apparently, were the accents of his youth.

A great deal of bosh has been talked and written about the Ivory Tower. For one thing, it is a tower of enchantment, and enchantment must always be part and parcel of poetry. For another thing, the toiling masses demand their dram of enchantment, which is better for them even than beer. Both are narcotics, but there is more wisdom in poetry than in wine. This poet says so, who has tried both. Nevertheless, try and stay in your ivory tower today. *You* try and do it!

This poet feels that he has grown up, as it were, backward. Maybe he has been growing down, down into the moil and toil of the world about him, beset by the multifold pressures of actuality. Where, by the way, the greatest of the first poets in English adventured long before him, when Geoffrey Chaucer walked a living world. That is hardly to draw a parallel! But this particular poet has, of late years, found himself going about the land talking out loud to people about poetry—an idea that would have filled him with stammering confusion in the past. For then he was a sage. Now—he is an itinerant lecturer.

This latter is a state of occasional exhilaration and frequent awful misgivings. After an attempted, necessarily sketchy, résumé of America's contribution to poetry in past and present—when there comes the aftermath of questions from the floor, two in particular are almost certain to be uttered (representing, as it might be, two opposite poles of inquiry): "What do you think of the poetry of Edgar Guest? . . . What do you think of Gertrude Stein?"

Before college audiences, the chilling conviction has come to this poet that almost any member of the English faculty who happened to be listening could render a far more illuminating discourse on poetry than he. For the poet's business in the past has been chiefly trying to write verse; and that is a very different thing from talking about it or, intelligently, about poets. But the world has got him out of any ivory tower he may possibly have inhabited—and is determined to ask him questions!

Before women's clubs the conviction has been borne in upon him that they merely wish him to read or recite poetry to them in order to lull or excite their senses. This he has been delighted to do, *maugre* that fateful moment when he hears a voice in his ear going on and on, thinks, "Why doesn't someone turn off that damn phonograph?"—and realizes that the reverberant vocality is his own.

How much of this is good for him? How much of this is good for them? This poet has never minded travel. He has now seen much of his country and many cities. He feels friendly toward people, any people. He has seen and talked to them in variety and quantity. He has tried to say honestly what he thought. But he has desired less and less to write any more poetry. Crossing snow-patched Montana in March, he was busy reading "Betrayal in Central Europe."

Fortunately, this poet's excursions are only seasonal. But at home, in his roaring city, the state of the world drives him into merely polemic verse. Whereas he would like to sit down and attempt—we said attempt—to write another "Kubla Khan." Why not? Not only nepenthe is there, but beauty for the ages.

"The world is too much with us—?" Ah, Wordsworth, old sockalexis, what a copper-riveted cinch you had! The poet of today is in a streamliner deafened by radio as it shoots like a projectile across the plains. He is one with the shouting lockstep of the streets. Or he is on a platform looking out upon a sea of innocent faces whose mouths murmur, "But he doesn't look at all like a poet!"

So be it. The sensitive plant in a garden grew—and they will presently be digging it up for bomb shelters. Not yet, however, shall we desert or betray our native land of the spirit. But also, we will make songs of these new things in our own fashion: of the phenomena of a world gestating horror, but the good as well as the evil dream; tell of the tyranny, the cruelty, the squalor, but also of the bravery, the struggle for justice and beauty; turn and face the multitude, be no longer fearful of a world that has so often betrayed us—and when the god speaks through us, make them hear.

W. R. B.

Senile Dementia

BY EVELYN ENGLE

AS records on an ancient gramophone
Whose coils while new may take another song,
But when the spiral grooves have been there long
Are more impregnable than flinty stone;
The cylinder once hardened now is prone
To take no new impressions, whether strong
Or weak is negligible, these belong
To the fresh imprint and to it alone.

So is it with the facile human brain
Which time congeals. The old and senile man,
To years and generations wholly blind,
Is still a youth and at his prime again;
And at his oldest never older than
The last thin etching on his brittle mind.

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Letters to the Editor: *In Appreciation of the Poet of Democracy*

Commemorating Whitman

SIR:—In 1925 an effort was made to commemorate Walt Whitman with a statue in the Manhattan he had loved and celebrated. But there was difficulty in obtaining a suitable location, and the net result was the plaque which the Authors Club unveiled on the site where was printed the first edition of "Leaves of Grass" in 1855. This faces the plaza at the Brooklyn end of the Brooklyn Bridge, which it has been proposed to name Walt Whitman Park. It is a happy suggestion, for it is in the very heart of the Brooklyn Whitman knew, in the days when he edited the *Eagle* and the *Freeman*. It is also proposed to issue a Whitman stamp this year, and rumor suggests a new Whitman society of national scope. Another indication of increasing appreciation of the poet of democracy is the recent action of the Board of Higher Education in approving the naming of the English building at Queens College, Walt Whitman Hall. Plans are already being executed to decorate this building appropriately, and artists are about to begin the work. Collectors have donated books and works of art, and others have permitted paintings of the poet to be copied, notably Miss Bertha Johnston, of Brooklyn, and the Huntington Historical Society. Mrs. Frank J. Sprague has presented busts of Emerson and Carlyle which belonged to Whitman, and Mr. Oscar Lion has given a Sidney Morse bust for which the poet sat.

The purpose of this letter is to invite Whitman collectors and admirers to assist us in creating a great Whitman collection in the youngest of the City colleges. Photographs, autographs, letters, manuscripts, works of art—all would be appreciated. When the owner does not feel able to share his treasures with the public, it is suggested that photographs be made and presented or that we be allowed to have an artist make a copy. Camden has a museum dedicated to Walt Whitman; why should not Brooklyn have its Park and Queens College its Walt Whitman Hall to impress the young with the ideals of democracy of which he is our most influential poetic voice?

EMORY HOLLOWAY.

Queens College,
Flushing, N. Y.

"Paradise Planters"

SIR:—Mr. Odell Shepard, in reviewing my book on Brook Farm ["Paradise Planters": *SRL,* March 11] . . . seems to feel as a man would who hears a beloved relative discussed by someone outside the family circle. The fact that the outsider may see the relative as clearly he cannot believe. One can in such a case pardon a certain unkind and hasty tone. But I feel Mr. Shepard goes too far in his statements, especially when he suggests that I "misunderstood and misinterpreted facts." If you put down a fact flatly as it is in open account, and interpret it only as it is interpreted by the words and writings of those who lived that fact—how can you misinterpret it?

Before printing, the entire galleys of my book were read by three men who know the Brook Farm milieu. Mr. R. E. S. Straker, for his information about the Protestant group at the Farm and Father Holden of the Paulists for the Catholic group. And the proof was also read by Mr. Haraszti, Curator of Rare Books at the Boston Public Library, himself a student and authority on Brook Farm and author of an excellent brochure on the subject—"The Idyll of Brook Farm." Their only corrections were in minor details of time and place. . . .

KATHERINE BURTON.

Bronxville, N. Y.

"Am I the only woman in America who isn't writing novels?"

Attention: P. E. G. Quercus

SIR:—Man, you Sassenachs should keep your tongues off the braid Scots! Ye aye do the most daft like things with it. Do you mind when Victor Hugo described the Scots Brigade at Waterloo "advancing with their *pibrochs* under their arms"? When he was told what a *pibroch* really was, he replied: "From now on it will be what I thought it was." . . . Aweel, man, I suppose from this meenute a *pibroch* will ha'e to be something a body does in honor o' a haggis. And it would seem there are different sizes o' them, for yon Mr. Greig "did" a small one! Oh weel!

Ye're nae worse than yon newspaper *Time* that spoke the other day o' wearing "a tartan." The Sassenach chiel was trying to describe a belted plaid and seemed totally unaware he might as well ha'e said the Scot "wore a red" or "a yellow" . . . !

Speaking of marmalade a body maun be unco carefu'! For "Caledonia Cream" ye canna use just onything wi' "Marmalade" and a wheen thistles an' a sprig or sae o' heather printed on the label. It maun be the real thing—a clear orange jelly wi' a wheen shreds o' the ooter skin o' the orange held in suspension. Oh! I havena told ye what a *pibroch* really is? Weel, look it up for yoursel'. I've been laid up in bed for six weeks and I couldna get my hands on my authorities. Forbye, the doctor says I mauna argue, and that's a sair deprivation!

JAMES KEDDIE.

Boston, Mass.

(Webster's New International defines pibroch: "An elaborate set of variations for the Scottish Highland bagpipe.")

Dick Merriwell

SIR:—For lo these many weary years I've been wondering what had become of those two super-villains, Chester Arlington and Porfias del Norte, who found their wicked way into my Merriwell yarns. Now, at last, you have given me the answer with your clever cartoon which appears on page 9 of the March 25 *Saturday Review of Literature.* They have joined in partnership to continue their evil ways on the path which leads straight to hell. Alas!

Thanks for the info., sad though it is.

GILBERT PATTEN,
Creator of Frank and Dick Merriwell.
New York City.

Christopher Pearse Cranch

SIR:—I am writing a biography of Christopher Pearse Cranch, the poet-painter. I should like to hear from any of your readers who have or know of any material concerning Mr. Cranch.

R. M. WHITNEY.

Roxbury Latin School
West Roxbury, Mass.

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Jerome Weidman

How I Write Short Stories*

BY JEROME WEIDMAN

THE short-story writer who assembles his work between the covers of a book voluntarily gives up one of the advantages peculiar to his craft. His stories may have been scattered through a dozen magazines over a period of years. It has been physically inconvenient heretofore to appraise them. Now, however, he has tied them into a readily available knot upon which attention may be focused with ease. He is no longer assured the immunity from critical scrutiny that he enjoyed before. He has, in the language of a more muscular profession, led with his chin. Perhaps it is because he has seen many a pugilist go on to the championship of his class while employing this odd method of offense that the writer continues to gather his far-flung short stories into books.

I started to write short stories because I wanted to write novels, and it seemed more intelligent to begin practising with a form that could be handled in a few pages. I was wrong. In like manner one might advise a poet that the best preparation for writing an epic is a studious application to the structure of the limerick. The technique of the novel, or, to use the phrase that has begun to receive much circulation in textbooks on the subject, the well-made novel, differs as radically from the technique of the short story as the technique of the poetic drama differs from that of the sonnet. But before I discovered my error I found that through practice I had learned something about the short story. By that time I had written many and published several. I liked the medium. I continued to write more and, as the problem of getting them published grew easier, I liked the medium even better.

The first difficulty I encountered when I started to write short stories was with length. The short ones came out too long and the long ones came out too short. The reason was soon obvious. A short one would look embarrassingly short; I was afraid that I had not given it enough attention; I went back and added more. It came out longer; but it did not come out the story I had planned; where the resemblance between the story I had in mind and the story I had written was closer, the defects were more obvious. The long ones, on the other hand, seemed to take such an unconscionable time in the writing that I rushed them. I was impatient to be done with the story in hand so I could start on another. As a result I would pass over an incident that cried for dramatization in terms of dialogue and action and dismiss it with a sentence of two of narrative summary. To counteract this tendency, I adopted the method of making outlines. At the head of a sheet of paper I would jot down, preferably in one sentence, the point of the story I wanted to write. Beneath I would list numerically the scenes I had chosen from the many I had observed or invented to illustrate my point. All problems of plot and structure were thrashed out and settled on this outline sheet. Once they were settled, and not before, I would start to write. As soon as I found that it was almost unbearably difficult to stick to the outline, I knew I was on the right road. Regardless of what brilliant turns of phrase tempted me into ornate digressions and embroidered bypaths, I stuck to the line of the story as I had mapped it on the outline sheet. It was a matter of several months before I could work comfortably and easily this way. The finished stories resembled more closely the stories I had had in mind. And bit by bit the finished stories began to sell. Gradually, as the method became more familiar, the necessity for elaborate outlines disappeared. In a year or two I had discarded the written outline sheets for a rigid mental equivalent. Occasionally, when I find myself getting gay, I go back to written outlines for a few weeks. I have known writers who found this method boring and unnecessary. I found it tedious and helpful.

I have never belonged to the You-Can-Cut-Off-My-Right-Arm-Up-To-Here-But-You-Can't-Cut-Off-That-Paragraph-From-My-Story school of writers. Perhaps if I had, I might have published better stories. But I daresay I would have published fewer. I have not found the demands of editors taxing or beyond endurance; on occasion I have found them to be incomprehensible. Once they have purchased a story, they seem to know what to do with it. The short-story writer's life becomes complicated only by the type of editor who has the mistaken notion that he can conjure a special kind of story out of an author by talking to him at great length in the manner of a football coach sending his team out on the field to beat the rival school.

On the whole, I have found editors friendly and pleasant, but unpredictable and uncertain and occasionally embarrassing in their desperation. So seldom do they get what they think they want that they tend to become incoherent in their insistent repetition of their needs. A writer does well to listen to them, but not too often and not for too long. They all want "good" stories and they all have their own definition of the word "good." It is never a short definition. Usually it takes the form of a thinly disguised statement of the particular magazine's editorial policy. To keep the vicious circle spinning prettily, the next step for the writer is to determine what that editorial policy is. I used to spend a good deal of time worrying about this. I no longer do. Judging by the wide gaps that exist between the material that finally appears in their magazines and their idealized and impassioned statements of what they insist on getting, I have been forced to conclude that they are either men with both eyes planted on the unattainable, and hence are unaware of what is going on at their feet, or they are just plain damned fools. I should say that they possess the qualities of both, but to no greater extent,

* The Saturday Review *this week presents its readers with an article which, with some additional material, will constitute the Preface to Jerome Weidman's forthcoming volume of short stories, "The Horse That Could Whistle Dixie," to be published by Simon & Schuster.*

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probably, than most people, including writers.

There are, I suppose, as many kinds of editors as there are magazines to employ them. I have been impressed by two types. The first, anxious to coax from you material that you would fling at his head if you had it, will buy you an excellent lunch with an office petty-cash voucher and then prevent you from enjoying it by boring the pants off you with intimate details about his guppy tank and his war experiences; all editors over forty seem to have commanded brigades in France at the age of twenty-two and "everything that's happened to me since then has been anticlimax." The second type of editor will call up and ask you politely, in a voice completely devoid of nonsense, to come down to his office and cut two thousand words from a story that he likes but cannot use because of its length. From the first editor you will get nothing but a temporarily expanded waistline and a feeling that perhaps you should not have given up your job selling vacuum cleaners on a commission basis. From the editor of the second class you will get a check and a sense of well-being that comes from knowing that you have improved something that you thought was a fairly good piece of work in the first place.

I am no longer surprised when a story sells, only pleased. I am constantly surprised at the market it sells to, sometimes amazed. Many times, with the words of a particular editor still ringing in my ears, I have molded a story to fit what he had told me were his specific needs. The stories were never successful. Even when they were sold and published they gave me no sense of accomplishment. Reading them in print made me feel uncomfortable and, I must confess, a bit ashamed. They were not honest.

After recovering from my original discomfort over these unsuccessful stories which had been aimed at a specific market, I tried to analyze the reasons for their failure. The mechanical defects were easily apparent. I had violated the very important short-story rule of natural length; I had compressed them or stretched them to fit a particular space. I had introduced a girl because this magazine insisted on girls in its stories, even though my theme required nothing more feminine than a boxing glove. I had removed an unpleasant character and substituted one that the editor would find more pleasing. I did many more things of this nature which tended to warp the stories beyond all recognition of my original intent. They were similar to the suit that a tailor might make for a customer he had never seen but whose measurements he had guessed at from the overheard conversation of the man's friends. It seemed unfair that after all this work, work that I never would have done on my own, the editor should refuse, however politely, to buy the story. My time is not extraordinarily valuable, but I dislike to waste it. I probed deeper. I went over the stories I had sold and compared them with those I had not. I made an amazing discovery. I found that the successful stories were the ones I had written to please myself.

This does not mean that the stories which sold were the ones I found vastly entertaining. I fail to see how any author, when he remembers the weariness and irritation that accompanied its creation, can find his own work entertaining. The stories that were successful were the stories I had written to my own satisfaction, the stories that had come out on paper with a close resemblance to the ones I had in mind. When I wrote the story I had planned, I was doing my own work. When I wrote the story an editor wanted, I was doing somebody else's work. I do other people's work badly.

Having reached this conclusion, I have acted upon it ever since. I write the stories I want to write in the way I think they should be written. Enough of them sell to keep me reasonably solvent as well as reasonably certain that I am on the right track. The ones that do not sell probably were not very good stories, anyway.

Giant of the Earth

O. E. RÖLVAAG: A Biography. By Theodore Jorgenson and Nora O. Solum. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1939. $4.

Reviewed by JAMES GRAY

THE writer of this review once sat with O. E. Rölvaag beside a Minnesota lake on a summer afternoon toward the end of Rölvaag's life. His fine achievements had won from the others at that picnic the highly intensified admiration which specialists feel for one of their own kind. But he wore his distinction with such casual dignity that, all in a moment, respect was warmed into affection.

Rölvaag had been silent for a moment, somehow imposing that silence on the others by the power of his individuality. When he spoke it was to say, quite simply, that because he knew he was soon to die, he reached out the more eagerly to all experience of human life: to the beauty of the lake, to the reticent glory of the fading sun, to communication with friends.

It was shocking to realize that this genial, handsome, and apparently robust man lived under a sense of doom. It is still more shocking to learn from this admirable biography that he had been under its shadow during most of his maturity. While he was still a student the forewarnings of the angina that finally killed him was prodding at his spirit. Rölvaag's biographers suggest that "the condition of his body had much to do with the religious conceptions he entertained." It is also easy to believe that his gallant, never submissive, response to destiny enormously quickened his perceptions and helped to make him one of the finest interpreters of human tragedy who has written in our time.

Rölvaag's whole development was slow. To call it tortured would be to ignore the patience with which he managed always to mitigate his sufferings. Though he sprang of Norwegian fisher-folk who showed a taste and aptitude for learning, he himself was by no means a precocious student. When, at twenty, he came to America to work for an uncle and other

O. E. Rölvaag

farmers in South Dakota, he learned English with painful laboriousness. His youthful mind vibrated between a sense of some greatness in him and a troubling confusion as to where his talents lay.

Friends at St. Olaf's college where he did his undergraduate work believed in him, lent him money for advanced studies in Norwegian literature at Oslo, received him back warmly as a member of the faculty, defended his slowly maturing creative powers against the misunderstanding of bigots. But still there were exacting labors to be performed under a burden of physical inadequacy. Teaching seemed increasingly like an insupportable distraction from the work that must get done. The early books were received with disheartening apathy. He had to augment his income with heroic enterprises as speaker for the Anti-Saloon League, receiving ten dollars as remuneration for three appearances in a day. And all the while "Giants in the Earth" waited to be written.

The authors of this biography were Rölvaag's associates at St. Olaf's. They have performed a labor of devotion and

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also one of distinguished scholarship. Quoting from diaries and early autobiographical fiction, and a fragmentary personal memoir, they sketch the background among the heroically hardy seafaring people. Detailed analyses of the beginning experiments show how Rölvaag's mind gradually freed itself of a sense of special duty toward the religious theme and found its own realistic expression.

The book is really more a critical estimate than it is a biography. Since it deals with an extraordinarily interesting mind, rather than with an eventful life, the emphasis is appropriate. Erring perhaps on the side of academic thoroughness in the close attention given to casual papers, it rises, toward the end, to genuine distinction in its just and never slavish estimate of Rölvaag's real significance.

James Gray is literary editor of the St. Paul Dispatch.

On the Record and Off the Record

NINETY TIMES GUILTY. By Hickman Powell. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1939. $2.50.

Reviewed by JOSEPH F. DINNEEN

WHAT to do with seventy prostitutes, who were compelled to live lives of virtue for months at the State's expense during the trial of Charles (Lucky) Luciano, is just one of the many knotty problems presented in this compact, concise, thorough, and eye-opening report of Thomas E. Dewey's prosecution of the nation's most repulsive racketeer; one of the first to land behind the bars for crimes that he actually committed instead of being tricked into a trial for violation of the income tax law.

Powell was in on this investigation with Dewey from the very beginning, and he has it down cold. He has condensed the seven-thousand-page record of the trial, presents the essential core of it, and amplifies that by bringing an assortment of underworld witnesses alive in his book. Dewey did not become interested in these prostitutes until a racket was imposed upon them and their earnings were heavily taxed by Lucky and his organization. The author gives the background that was missing in the daily reports of the trial. Things that appeared insignificant on the public record become important and fit into their places in the picture puzzle of that trial and the investigation. He explains, for instance, why Nancy and Thelma went abroad after the trial, and who paid for it. Headlines made it appear that Dewey had bribed them to testify with a promise of a trip abroad, when, as a matter of fact the boys in Dewey's office got together and raised a fund as an afterthought for them. It's too bad that Powell's correct and documented account of the whole thing cannot catch up with those headlines.

Hickman Powell

This seems to be the real, inside story of the Dewey investigation, on the record and off the record, a picture of what went on behind the scenes as well as an analysis of what was made public. The on-the-record story of Lucky was interesting and provocative enough, but I found the off-the-record portraits even more so; the manner in which the girls from brothels were rounded up and held as material witnesses; the way they were questioned by investigators; the attitude of a group of young, college-bred boys toward these girls, and their responses to such impersonal and academic treatment. No such number of prostitutes had ever been gathered together before, and the Dewey staff probably learned more about it as a business than has ever been known before; the average weekly earnings of call girls and house girls, and the effect of amateur competition during the depression.

This book will be conned very carefully by district attorneys and their assistants across the country, and a good many of them will read it with envy. The same job could be done by them in almost any American city, but such investigations are expensive, and in these days when taxpayers are cracking down upon budgets and appropriations, there isn't much chance for them. New York had the money and New York could afford this cleanup. It put Lucky behind the bars. It straightened out seventy girls for several months. It lifted the racket, and the racketeer's tax from vice. Most of the girls were determined to go straight, but I gathered from Powell's conclusion that almost all of them found their way back to houses or call lists. At least they can keep the money they make now. It was not Dewey's object to stamp out vice, but to stamp out rackets, and in this case, again, he succeeded.

Joseph F. Dinneen is the author of a Boston political novel, "Ward Eight."

Pastoral France

BORN OF WOMAN. By Raymonde Vincent. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1939. $2.50.

Reviewed by ISABELLA W. ATHEY

DO not be put off by the title of this novel; the French original was called "Campagne," and that unobtrusive title was suitable and expressive. For it is the country which contributes not only setting by motive and significance to this story of a farming family in Berry, written by a young woman born in that province, whose only "education" until the age of seventeen was knowledge of the catechism.

This rambling account of an orphan girl's life first with her grandmother and then with her uncle and cousins offers an acute contrast to the rural France of Zola. In Raymonde Vincent's book not only is human nature fundamentally benevolent, but the land itself exists in harmony with those who work it. Their life is really another version of the theme of the succeeding seasons: the planting, cultivating, and harvesting of the wheat. And there is still another version in the descriptions of the children's first communion ceremonies, of Marie's wedding, of Aunt Victoire's death, of the special mass for the dead in the War.

The treatment of these last events suggests that the author's religious faith has some bearing on the expressed atmosphere of contentment and solidity pervading existence at Les Chaumes. Here is not so much a question of farm and family idealized as of the absence of problems *per se*. There is petty friction, genuine grief, but no unbalancing disaster. In one place the element of the unresolvable does appear, in the character of Marie's grandmother, a brief, clear-cut study of pathological bitterness, of a solitary in the grand style.

It may seem that the idyllic quality of "Born of Woman" is a product of nostalgia. Yet the motivating nostalgia is emphatically not sophisticated or urban; it contains no irritating eulogy of the life it depicts, nor does it say, "Let us go back to the good old times!" The nostalgia consists of a loving attempt to describe the innumerable aspects of the countryside and the seasons, and to correlate with them the author's scale of values. It should be said that these values may seem a little remote to many readers, and that they may easily be subject to misinterpretation (the *Action Française* could make fine propaganda of such a book). This, however, is secondary; only a deep prejudice against idealism of sentiment would deny the novel's honesty, or the dramatic accuracy of some of its scenes.

It is worth mention, too, since the book is a translation, that the English version follows the French closely but with discrimination, and is in general very good.

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Buried Alive

THE HEROES. By Millen Brand. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1939. $2.

Reviewed by RICHARD A. CORDELL

CRITICS and readers who two years ago were excited by Millen Brand's first novel, "The Outward Room," will not be disappointed in his second novel, "The Heroes." Although it may not reveal any marked growth of talent, there is no falling off in the simple power and beauty that made "The Outward Room" so strangely appealing. Millen Brand's novels are fiction at its simplest: there is practically no plot in the conventional sense, no intrigue, no climaxes, little suspense; the characters are so uneducated and unsophisticated that they come near being inarticulate; the settings are mean streets and mean rooms; the author achieves an almost complete objectivity, and whatever comment there may be—political, social, or economic—is implied, never italicized. Such objectivity, however, does not result in a mere bleak, scientific report; "The Heroes" has warmth without sentimentality, and with no trace of didacticism, it is curiously more heartening than the deliberately inspirational novel.

Lotte Jacobi

Millen Brand

"The Heroes" is the pathetic story of George Burley, a war veteran forced by a physical injury and the depression to enter a soldiers' home in New England. Here for two years he lives in close association with fellow-derelicts — once "heroes"—now almost forgotten in a nation harassed by new anxieties and economic distress. The "home" is presented to us completely—its day-by-day routine, its rooms, its fields, its inmates, its activities. For three hundred pages we live the life of these men, share their understanding of one another and their clumsy affections, hope with them, despair with them. There is a narrative thread: George falls in love with a girl who works in a factory in the town near the soldiers' home. Marriage and happiness seem an impossible dream to them, as the depression continues and the hero's efforts to find employment are repulsed. Finally when he receives his war bonus he has an opportunity to set up his own cabinet shop. Like a new Adam and a new Eve "they hand in hand with wandering steps and slow" leave the "home" and the factory and bravely face their new world.

Novelists have long recognized the effectiveness of an institution as a milieu. Insulated against outside influences, characters may simply and easily reveal themselves, personal relationships are tense, and the eternal conflict between the individual and the group or the system is sharp and clear. Millen Brand treats the institution with a scrupulous, Galsworthian fairness. There is no charge of injustice and cruelty such as is delivered against the schools in "Nicholas Nickleby" and "Of Human Bondage," the reformatory in "The Thibaults," or the women's prison in "Ann Vickers." There are no mystical overtones or symbolism as in "The Magic Mountain." The soldiers' home in "The Heroes" will neither please nor offend the Veterans' Bureau and the American Legion. There is no charge of brutality, senseless red tape, or neglect. The superintendent and the chaplain are not objects of satire. But throughout the novel is the almost stifling sense of entombment, of claustrophobia, and we understand the men's burning desire to return to the active world from which they are so pitifully cut off.

Millen Brand's style is uneuphuistic almost to the point of bareness. In the whole of "The Heroes" there are hardly a half dozen figures of speech, even of the simplest kind. Brand manages to escape the staccato, primer-like march of sentences that makes Hemingway's pages irritating at times, for an over-simplicity can underleap itself. The unvarnished and unadorned style is often not far removed from the monotonous, and is justifiable only when it fits the theme and characters. In both "The Outward Room" and "The Heroes," simple annals of the poor, the style is proper; but readers interested in Millen Brand's solid talent will welcome a widening of his subject matter. After all, "The Heroes" is a variation of the theme of "The Outward Room"—a case history, another example of great courage among the *misérables* all but defeated by outrageous fortune. Brand knows the sordid life of the very poor, but he also knows, from the inside, advertising and big business, and is said to have a keen sense of humor. If it is true that "The Heroes" is the first of eight novels he plans to write before 1952, he will have ample chance to prove his versatility.

Red Socks in Bohemia

HARLEQUIN HOUSE. By Margery Sharp. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1939. $2.50.

Reviewed by ROSEMARY CARR BENÉT

IT is perhaps unfair that every reviewer uses an author's best work as a yardstick to measure what comes after. But what else can one do? The first question a reader will ask about Margery Sharp's new book is, "Is it as funny as 'The Nutmeg Tree?'" The answer, unfortunately, is no. Nor is it built on as amusing a basic idea as "The Flowering Thorn." It is a good light novel, if one did not have to compare it with those two exceptionally good light novels which have preceded it.

The situation is mildly funny. The characters are mildly funny. Lisbeth Campion, a beautiful young lady, sets out to look after her wayward brother, Ronny Campion. They are an irresponsible pair. Lisbeth calls everyone darling and collects admirers as clover attracts bees. Her brother is always in scrapes. His last was being arrested for selling cocaine, which quite naturally outraged his family and his friends and his sister's fiancé. The Campions start life anew with a quaint character named Mr. Partridge, whom Lisbeth met casually at Dormouth Bay, a seaside town. Mr. Partridge is "partly like Sherlock Holmes and partly like a knight errant" and is the funniest character in the book. He wears red socks, and has three hundred pairs which he bought at a bankrupt sale, and keeps stored under his mattress. The three start up a Bohemian household. Lisbeth works for a concern called "Wanted Women" which sends her out on part-time jobs, to mind children, or arrange flowers or tend shops. Mr. Partridge dons a kilt to advertise a Scotch tea room . . . and Ronny paints advertising cards for Ladies' Hosiery. How the Campions work out their future takes up the rest of the book.

The view that comedy is easier to do and is somehow inferior to tragedy, has always irritated me. The light hand is as much of a gift as the sombre eye of the great grim realists, and quite as rare. But here the material that the light hand is working with seems a little slight and contrived. It will probably be no satisfaction to Miss Sharp to be told that she is so very, very good that this should be better. Now if I had never read "The Flowering Thorn" and "The Nutmeg Tree" . . . .

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Elliot Paul's Novel of Industrial Action

THE STARS AND STRIPES FOREVER. By Elliot Paul. New York: Random House. 1939. $2.50.

Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

STARRET-LORING and Company dominated the small New England town of Meldon, and Mark Loring dominated the company. Thanks to his payroll, the butcher and baker and newspaper editor, to say nothing of the mayor and the police force and the bankers of Meldon, lived and had their being. Mark's father had run the factory according to the most enlightened principles of profitable paternalism ("There was none of this government coddling then. A man had to sink or swim, and not one of them was ever abandoned by Starret-Loring if he was worth his salt") and Mark continued to run it along the same lines. He was a benevolent employer, according to his lights, so long as his autocracy was unquestioned, but, when the C.I.O. came to Meldon and threatened his irresponsible power by attempting to organize his employees, he turned ugly. No damned Reds, operating under the protection of an unconstitutional Wagner Act and a president who deserved to be tarred and feathered, were going to tell him how to run his own damned business. The one-time All-American athlete would show them!

How he showed them is the story of "The Stars and Stripes Forever," and the methods that he employed are familiar to everyone who has even a bowing acquaintance with labor troubles past and present. The first C.I.O. moves were met by refusals to negotiate and by threats, unofficial but unmistakable, that the factory might be dismantled and its machinery moved to a site across the state line. This would mean the ruin of Meldon, and the threat was calculated to incite the town's Better Businessmen against the organizers and their misled "victims." But the Better Businessmen could only fume and fear; the organization continued. Members of a committee seeking to represent the employees were fired; a company-controlled strike-vote was forced and faked. But it was no use. The strike was called and a majority of the employees walked out. The plant was crippled. "'All right,' Mark said, 'if that's what they want. Close down, and board up all the windows.'"

Mark Loring broke the strike according to the best traditions: by means of a lockout that meant eventual starvation for all Factory Town; by *agents provocateurs* and scab gorillas; by undercover propaganda among the "loyal" workers, and by an illegal spiriting away of the C.I.O. leaders; by involving the strikers, against their will, in acts of violence; by Burns guards, rifles, and tear-gas. When it was all over, "The factory was running, the dead were dead . . ." The last words of the narrator, in whose mouth Elliot Paul has put the story, are: "Mark's sitting on the world." But, plainly enough, one is meant to read, ". . . on a volcano."

Mr. Paul has written an unequivocal tract for the times, but he has not written a good novel, and his tract would be more powerful if his novel were more substantial. Profound feeling went into the writing of this book, no doubt, but the writer has failed to communicate his emotion, because emotion can be communicated only by creative or recreative art, and such art is here lacking. His narrative is

Elliot Paul

as interesting as a rousing left-wing newspaper story or a vigorous article in a liberal magazine, and only in the same way that they are interesting. It does not give us what good novels give, for it has no life of its own,—a life provided by its characters, and made real and moving to us by their command of our imagination and understanding. The thesis does not take on flesh and blood, although blood flows.

Elliot Paul's failure as a novelist, writing of a land in which he has his roots and of people so close to his heart, is the more conspicuous because only two years ago he succeeded so triumphantly in writing, in his own person, of the people and woes of a little Balearic island. And it is a strange failure, for he is an experienced novelist. Were he but lately converted to the faith he preaches, one might think that the artist had been overwhelmed by a tide of new-found belief, emotion, and material; that the convert, still learning to lisp the shorter catechism, was not yet muscled for the arena of apologetics. As it is, one can only wonder, while setting down "The Stars and Stripes Forever" as no more than a small journalistic blow struck on the side of the angels of the left.

Atmosphere of Decay

GOODBYE TO BERLIN. By Christopher Isherwood. New York: Random House. 1939. $2.50.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

THE first section of this book is called "A Berlin Diary (Autumn 1930)"; the last is "A Berlin Diary (Winter 1932-3)." Between lie four narrative pieces, *tranches de vie* with hardly enough plot for the name "short story," but with too much depth to be called sketches, although that is the word Mr. Isherwood himself uses for them in his brief and modest preface, in which he tells us that the pieces in this book, as well as his previous novel, "The Last of Mr. Norris," were originally planned as part of a huge episodic novel of pre-Hitler Berlin. That was to have been called "The Lost"; but the author says he found that title too grandiose for this book.

It is nevertheless an illuminating title to bear in mind as one reads "Goodbye to Berlin." Here one sees, set down with a perfection of observation which makes analysis unnecessary, the psychological atmosphere which made Hitlerism possible; the author's fellow-lodgers are of the expropriated, drifting petty bourgeoisie held by a state of mind hardly positive enough to be called despair; but among the pupils to whom he taught English one catches glimpses of the terrified rich, barricading themselves in the fashionable, cheerless suburbs behind defenses of barbed wire and police dogs. Spiritually, he shows us, the people he knew lived in a kind of coma; they were not filled with resentment or rebellion; and just because they were a vacuum the flood of Nazism was able to take possession of them. And, running like an accompaniment all through the book, is the theme of homosexuality, not merely the advertised, painted boys of the notorious brothels, but the more poisonous homosexuality that is comradeship and masculinity gone wrong.

Mr. Isherwood combines an uncanny accuracy of observation and ability to convey his impressions with a universal sympathy almost unknown in English literature. He does not condemn the painted boys; he presents them. He does not condemn the brutal Storm Troopers who begin to appear in the last diary; he presents them, and leaves the reader to judge if he will. One feels that this impartial sensitivity has in it a certain defect of its own; the book leaves one with the feeling that Mr. Isherwood merely let impressions come to him; one cannot help wishing that he had looked for more shades of opinion and character, had tried to find somewhere the surviving idealism of the Weimar Republic, or Leftists more intelligent than his emotional Communists. Perhaps that will yet be corrected in that huge episodic novel.

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THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS has published two books you should read on what's going on in Europe. If it's important to read *Mein Kampf*, to find out what Hitler is after, it may be worth seeing what the others stand for too, Fascists, Communists, Catholics and Democracies. It's all set down in *The Social and Political Doctrines of Contemporary Europe*, by M. Oakeshott ($3.50). The statements for each creed are quoted from the words of the leaders themselves, with the exception of the Nazi section. Herr Hitler withheld permission to quote his words directly, so a précis is given. The book will clear your mind as to what it's all about. ☞Then, what to do about it? The first constructive suggestion we've seen is in *Economics or Politics?* by Paul Van Zeeland. It costs only 75 cents, but the suggestions in it might save the world. The author was formerly Prime Minister of Belgium.

☞The best selling Cambridge book this year is Coulton's *Medieval Panorama*, and it shows no sign of letting up. The reason: you can open it anywhere and find yourself reading along and not wanting to stop. ☞Try a page in a bookstore. Interesting, unusual information + a lively style + good value (800 pages, well illustrated, for $4.00). ☞Selling slowly, in spite of grand reviews, is *Portrait of a Chef*, Helen Morris's amusing life of Alexis Soyer, an eccentric but likable Victorian ($3.00). If you "saw the reviews but didn't get around to reading it", send a postcard to your bookseller, or telephone him now.

☞Another biography of a little-known man is Bryant's life of Samuel Pepys. The third volume, *The Saviour of the Navy*, costs $3.75. We say "little-known" because it's extraordinary how much there was to the busy little hero that isn't in the *Diary*.

☞Remarkable psychologically was Henri Beyle, or Stendhal. A creature of passion and sensibility, he couldn't keep his intelligence from working, even in moments of supreme emotion. *Stendhal*, by Professor F. C. Green, is described by the N. Y. TIMES as an "excellent critical biography . . . succinct, yet complete." The reviewer writes, "he really does give his readers a vital comprehension of the curious nature of Stendhal."

☞In lighter mood is Fraser Darling's *Wild Country* ($2.75), which is "the kind of book *The Natural History of Selborne* might have been, if Gilbert White had had a Leica." The S.R.L. called the photographs "among the finest of their kind ever made . . . they are one with the text, which is written in a simple, effortless, and evocative prose." ☞Reviewers have commented on the attractive binding of *Wild Country*. The cloth used is new to books; it was previously used for aeroplane luggage.

☞You will like the *Cambridge Bulletin*, describing recent Cambridge books, with eight pages of illustrations. We shall send you one on application; our pleasure will be the greater if your postcard states that you have bought one of the books mentioned above.

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The Development of Psychoanalysis

NEW WAYS IN PSYCHOANALYSIS. By Karen Horney, M.D. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. 1939. $3.

SOCIAL INTEREST: A CHALLENGE TO MANKIND. By Alfred Adler, M.D. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1939. $3.

Reviewed by BERTRAM D. LEWIN, M.D.

THE two books under review have in common a high estimation of the role played by social factors in the psychology of the individual and in the neuroses. They also have in common a connection with psychoanalysis: in Dr. Adler's case, historical, in Dr. Horney's case, actual.

Dr. Horney's book, indeed, is professedly a critique of Freudian psychoanalysis. "The purpose of this book," she writes, "is not to show what is wrong with psychoanalysis, but, through eliminating the debatable elements, to enable psychoanalysis to develop to the height of its potentialities." Hence, presumably the choice of the title "New Ways in Psychoanalysis." Actually, however, it is much clearer to the reader which old roads Dr. Horney believes should be closed than which new ways are to be opened. Dr. Horney takes especial exception to Freud's theories regarding female sexuality, the role of infantile material and conflict in determining later conflicts and neuroses. She redefines the Œdipus complex and narcissism, and sets up an original theory of anxiety. From these negative criticisms, Dr. Horney salvages many of the basic facts but seems to subordinate whatever might be called instinct (such as masochistic tendencies) to character development. Her stress throughout is on the character (in the technical psychological sense) and its reactions in the social setting, so that the transformation she proposes in psychoanalysis appears to be the inclusion of certain psychoanalytic data and a few ideas in a more catholic characterology. The book has much in it that would interest psychologically oriented readers, but as a critique it would mean something perhaps only to those who have a professional interest and training in the field. The style is to be commended for its simplicity and clarity.

Dr. Adler's connection with Freudian psychoanalysis is more historical, and as he complains, more accidental. Had it not been for Freud, Adler would not have been forced to consider and offer an explanation for certain phenomena which were not originally envisaged by his theories. Adler is said to have once compared himself with Freud by means of the familiar trope of the pygmy on the giant's shoulder, but a truer comparison would be the one Brahms used of himself and Beethoven, the difficulty of composing symphonies with that giant's footsteps thundering behind him. Thus it is that where Adler feels compelled to refer to Freud, as in the case of dream psychology, he reveals himself as less composed and less convincing than when he writes of the subject that attracted his original interest, that is, man and society. Dr. Adler has nothing to add to his previous works that is significantly new, but he restates his now familiar ideas on the inferiority complex, social feeling, the desire for power, pampering, and childhood education. The points made seem simple enough but they are sometimes obscured, in spite of what appears to be a highly adequate translation, by a propensity to an involved and somewhat pedantic style.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE AFFAIR OF THE BLACK SOMBRERO *Clifford Knight* (Dodd, Mead: $2.)	Doubtfully accidental death of California spinster, and two other related demises, cleared up by Huntoon Rogers on Mexican junket.	Skillfully characterized story, with vivid figure of much maligned young girl running excellent sleuthing close race for honors.	Extra good
JUDAS, INCORPORATED *Kurt Steel* (Little, Brown: $2.)	Hank Hyer, in Conn. town to investigate industrialist's murder, runs into hornets'-nest of trouble.	Nasty ways of *agents provocateurs* shown up beautifully in yarn that bulges with action from start to surprise finish.	Grand
SEVEN TICKETS TO SINGAPORE *Ared White* (Houghton, Mifflin: $2.)	Mr. Zoll badly wanted American inventor's device to end war in air. Lance Fargo, U. S. Secret Agent, thwarts him—and others.	Better grade international intrigue yarn with colorful Oriental background, murder, kidnappings, cryptograms, etc.	Action plus
THE CASE OF THE CRUMPLED KNAVE *Anthony Boucher* (Simon and Schuster: $2.)	Poisoning of wealthy playing-card collector in Cal. mansion sets strange puzzle for sleuths O'Breen and Colonel Rand.	Interesting data about "tarot" cards, etc., and their connection with triple killing, help yarn with rather involved solution.	Good

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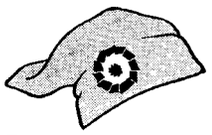

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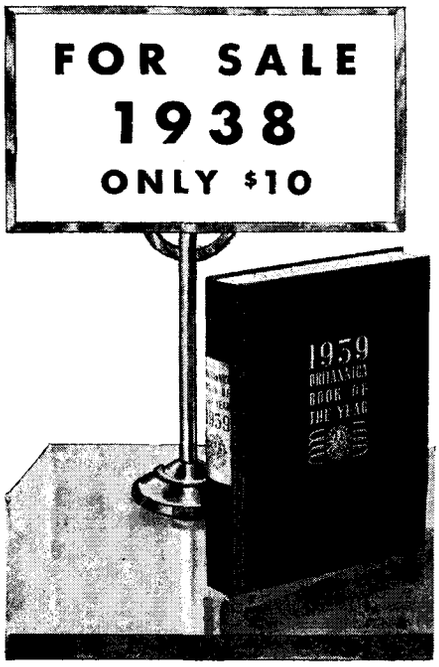

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The New Books

Biography

AFRICAN NOTEBOOK. By Albert Schweitzer. Holt. 1939. $2.

Albert Schweitzer, medical missionary, has lived for many years in French Equatorial Africa and writes of it with neither the wishful thinking of the hasty traveler nor the disdain of the average settler. His hospital was on the hill where the original "Trader Horn" built his trade and fables, and to it came such various natives as those dying inexplicably from sorcerers' curses and the habitual earth-eaters who once had lived in the famine district. His stories are simple ones, of the high and perilous finance of wife-buying, of the witch doctor who bewitched himself, of the natives transplanted to Europe where men and animals must burn up inside and breathe smoke on frosty days. This is a little book, but it is filled with the great kindliness of a missionary who sees Africans as human beings and not merely Christian mortar.

H. D.

Fiction

THE DEVIL WE KNOW. By Pamela Frankau. Dutton. 1939. $2.50.

Pamela Frankau has turned away from the gayety and inconsequence of "Laughing in the Sun." Her present novel creates a tragic portrait within the frame of a seriously considered social background. The devil that we know, of the title, is "the devil of cruelty, bondage, and persecution alive in the minds of men today" —and since Miss Frankau is an intensely personal novelist, she tells of the evil and wreckage that follow this particular devil cult as it affects an individual victim.

The central theme of the novel is the disintegration of a personality through persecution. Philip Meyer is a brilliant and attractive young Jew in the London of 1931 when anti-Semitism was still happily not prevalent. But even then the race question tormented him. And when finally the brutal forces outside him became overwhelming, he disappeared from the world that had known him and one Philip Meyer died.

Five years later, in a London impregnated with the racial intolerance which was spreading its contagion from Berlin, the name of Philip Meyer begins to be heard again. It is said that he has been mad during the interval, that he is mad now. An ugly cloud of mystery seems to surround him. Finally old friends reclaim him temporarily, but in the end he starts for Germany, in full understanding of the concentration camp menace, to look for a brother in whom until this minute he had never shown any interest.

The picture Miss Frankau draws is a devastating one. She makes Philip Meyer live and makes his suffering real: makes the waste of his potentialities tragic; but she obscures the point she wishes to establish by failing ever to show clearly how much of Philip's disintegration comes from actual persecution and how much from his subjective *sense* of it. She has really incorporated two different ideas in one story with a confusing result. The characters have the bright activity expected from this author but aside from the central one, they are drawn from that borderland of types which belong to fiction rather than to life. "The Devil We Know" is an interesting and provocative story that will leave most readers unsatisfied because it is not better, but which will not leave their memories for a time.

G. G.

THE FAR DOWN. By Elizabeth Corbett. Appleton-Century. 1939. $2.50.

The small town and the large family have always been this author's special province, and she creates them in their fullness with the microscopic detail and careful brushwork of the Dutch painters. The setting of her latest novel is the Middle Western town of Mount Royal, which readers of her earlier work will remember as the home of many of Miss Corbett's attractive characters.

The Tim Malone family, eight in number, live near the Old Soldiers' Home on the outskirts of Mount Royal. The life of the children is made colorful and delightful by the attention of the veterans among whom Malone works until his early death. The story is mainly concerned with the efforts of the Malones to get along after the loss of the father. They have energy and wit, and are prepared to meet life on its own terms according to their natures. Two daughters of contrasting temperaments form the backbone of the novel, but it is the larger unit, the spreading intertwined growth of family life, where a sudden outstretching on the part of one means movement and rearrangement for all, that gives the book its individual flavor. The gay, fact-facing daily living of ordinary people offers Elizabeth Corbett the best field for her talent, and she very wisely adheres to it.

G. G.

STAR AT NOON. By Louise Redfield Peattie. Doubleday, Doran. 1939. $2.

Mrs. Peattie weaves elaborate words and philosophical discussions around a painfully complex family situation and cloaks in highly-colored phrases the conventionality of its solution. She writes of the fact that in spite of divorce some permanent bond still lingers from most marriages, so that in a monogamous society a man is often faced with a painful choice between a present wife and a former wife, with either of whom he could be almost happy were t'other fair charmer not there. Unfortunately, though the difficulties of this situation are clearly stated, and the principal actors shown to be agreeable people, none of them quite claims the reader's sympathy. All of them —Leo, his fat, adoring present wife, and his long-lost beautiful former wife—speak with the same voice, civilized, charming, superficial. Not even the additional complication of the love affair which develops between Emma's son and Bliss and Leo's

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daughter succeeds in making the novel poignant. Spun out to book length, the thinness of its characters and ideas are as apparent as the neatness and competence of its spinning.

K. S.

HAWK AMONG THE SPARROWS. By Desmond Hawkins. Knopf. 1939. $2.50.

Mr. Hawkins's novel has few incidents and few personalities, but those it has it presents with animation. It is the tale of a lower middle-class family, husband, wife, and niece, living on the outskirts of an English village, and of the boarder who, in answer to an advertisement, appears from nowhere to take one of their rooms. Mrs. Sparge, who presides over the establishment, is an erstwhile actress who has known her days of triumph and has now declined to the memory of them and a plump rusticity, and who rules her cowed husband and her less compliant niece with that dangerous power that is a compound of unscrupulousness and seeming passivity. Both aunt and niece fall under the spell of the boarder, who is ingenuous enough not to realize at first the attraction he exerts over the girl, and sufficiently sophisticated to see through and repulse the wiles of the aunt. Mr. Hawkins plays one woman off against the other, precipitating, before he releases his hero from the toils of his own attitude, a scene of violent denunciation. It is in the contrasting types he presents, the simple, sly, and foolish adolescent girl, the sensuous, crafty woman, that he shows his skill. His book has freshness of approach and deftness of characterization, and progresses through its story with a nice economy of means. Mr. Hawkins will bear watching.

A. L.

Miscellaneous

BALLET TRADITIONAL TO MODERN. By Serge Lifar. Translated by Cyril W. Beaumont. Putnam. 1939. $4.

The American public knows Serge Lifar only as a dancer, and as such he is not popular. In his few appearances here his undoubted talent has seemed smothered in egotism and technical laziness. He was the youngest of Diaghileff's protégés, the last dancer-choreographer whom Diaghileff attempted to train, and is still in his early thirties. In Paris, where he is the director of the opera ballet, he has a large following. Now the publication of his book makes him appear in a new light, that of an earnest student of ballet history and a serious theorizer about its esthetics. His volume is written with a broad knowledge of ballet history and with an intellectual approach, and is unusually well arranged and illustrated. It is an interpretive rather than a factual account, and is consequently more readable but less important in dance literature than, for instance, a source book like Cyril Beaumont's "Complete Book of Ballets."

The part of the book most eagerly read will be the section dealing with Diaghileff and his Ballets Russes. Here is still another first hand account of that saga, to

(*Continued on page* 21)

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O'er gobbets and shreds of the corpse of "Ulysses."
O Stephen Dedalus, things look blue for you
If this is what sixteen years could do for you.

LEONARD BACON.

☞Old Pancreatic feels terse: result of an Easter overcast by Fascism and the N. Y. State Income Tax. ☞The power of the Berlin-Rome axis is maybe not Strength through Joy but Strength through Neurosis: not Kraft durch Freude but Kraft durch Freud. ☞Or Kraft durch Ebing. ☞Psychologically we were a bit disturbed by a photo (Acme) of F. D. R.'s desk, crowded with so many clocks, gadgets, toy donkeys, knicknack bricabracs. ☞Then, in better humility, we reflected on our own desk. ☞*Serons-Nous Prêts?* exclaimed a recent issue of the Paris *Nouvelles Littéraires:* it didn't mean preparations for war, but would the special stamps, medals and salvoes for the 300th birthday of Racine. ☞The book Old Q. is most eager to see for relaxation is *Lizzie Borden: A Study in Conjecture* by Mrs. Belloc Lowndes. ☞Wish the fellow who writes those *Blue Mask* crime stories wouldn't always call a French hoodlum an Apaché: it's *apache* (no accent). ☞Cyril Clemens, writing about the late E. V. Lucas, says "I cannot do better than quote William Cortes Holliday." ☞Sure you can, Cyril: you can quote Robert Cortes Holliday. ☞The Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia Univ., offers for $1.20 postpaid a *Shakespeare Collection,* reproductions of interesting illustrative matter re the Swan, for teacher-pupil stimulus. This in honor of Shakespeare's birthday. ☞Arthur Pforzheimer, bookseller at 26 East 56, served cocktails with "a pre-view of the childhood letters of Theodore Roosevelt," on April 11th. ☞The American Book-Stratford Press will serve cocktails at 75 Varick Street on April 28 for their 40th anniversary. ☞Blanche Shoemaker Wagstaff, Jessie B. Rittenhouse, Joseph Auslander and numerous others are preparing a petition to nominate Sidney Lanier for the Hall of Fame. Enthusiasts may communicate with Miss Wagstaff at Wilton, Conn. ☞Joe Jackson, the distinguished book critic of the San Francisco *Chronicle,* went on a coast-to-coast NBC network on Easter Sunday. Mr. Jackson has broadcast book-news for 15 years on the Coast airwaves; his talks will now be a national feature every Sunday at 5:30 p.m. E. S. T. ☞Our pipe-smoke correspondents keep telling us that the tobacconist whose mixtures have the most literary names is James B. Russell, 23 W. 57 St. For instance *Parsons' Pleasure* and *Baby's Bottom.* ("Smooth but not heavy.")

☞E.. Phillips Oppenheim has placed his literary representation in the hands of Curtis Brown, Ltd., both in the U. S. and Britain. ☞Harry Weinberger, counselor-at-law, writes us an exciting letter about Henry George. He says "George's chapter *The Certain Truth,* in *Progress and Poverty,* is the most beautiful piece of writing in the English language and stirs the blood like a clarion call." ☞Fred R. Jones, bookseller at Oceanside, L. I., is busy, with Cleveland Rodgers, Carolyn Wells, Walter Damrosch, Will Durant and others, in reorganizing the Walt Whitman Society of America for Walt's coming 120th birthday. ☞*Discovering Long Island,* by William Oliver Stevens (Dodd Mead) is an unusually skillful blend of historic reminiscence and picturesque travel; it should please those visitors who learn that there's still a lot to look at East of Grover. ☞The huge Bermuda Clipper, taking off from Manhasset Bay, goes roaring just over the Fantods every few days and always reminds us of a minuscule book about Bermuda that was published by the smallest publishing house in the world, under a tree near a cathedral on the Hempstead Plains. ☞Someone stole the bronze tablet off the tree; and the tree itself was blown down in the Hurricane; and even the little book went out of sight. ☞And we are still astonished that so many of the Bermuda vacationists don't know that Shakespeare wrote about those islands. ☞Part of the Great Tradition of Whitman is that books about Walt get remaindered almost quicker than anything else. *Walt Whitman's Pose* (highly interesting and entertaining) issued a year ago at $3.75 is now available at the Eastern Book Co., 254 West 31, N. Y. C., for 95 cents. ☞Paul and Rhea de Kruif have written a preface for a catalogue of *Books on Dogs* issued by the Torchlight Book Exchange, Portland, Michigan. ☞Joseph W. Lippincott will make the second presentation of the Lippincott Award at the American Library Association conference in San Francisco, in June. The award, first made last year, is $500 and a certificate memorializing "the most outstanding professional achievement in the field of librarianship."

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The New Books

(*Continued from page* 19)

add to the already vast amount of material on the subject. Lifar's opinion is as prejudiced as a contemporary opinion must be, but at least he maintains his dignity and never descends to the usual gossip.

The aspect of dancing which most fascinates and puzzles Lifar is its relation to music. He analyzes this relation through all its phases from the seventeenth century to the present, discussing the various shades between the two extremes of music made to order for dancing, and dancing as an "illustration" of a composition intended to be purely musical. The question of how music and the dance shall be united in the future is hotly argued; it goes deeply into the nature of both arts. Lifar's ideas are the result of the practical experience of a choreographer who is by nature responsive to music, and they are penetrating and suggestive.

E. G.

NAVY MEN. By James B. Connolly. John Day. 1939. $3.50.

James B. Connolly wrote tales of the Gloucester fishermen which were both popular and admired a generation ago; was a war correspondent, and before that so intimate a friend of Roosevelt I, that Uncle Joe Cannon could wisecrack, "All I know about the Navy is when the President orders it to his front door for Jim Connolly to review." As reporter or privileged passenger he has been present at some notable naval occasions, particularly the rescue of the steamer *Luckenbach* by a destroyer after her heroic duel with a German submarine that outranged her guns, and the rush of a pair of battleships to do rescue work after the Jamaica earthquake had laid Kingston in ruins. The latter was the occasion when an Americanophobe governor-general ordered the Navy doctors and food-bearers out of his island; Connolly was the man who saw that the story got to the newspapers.

He has put all this and much more into an unpretentious book of journalism and personal narrative which achieves a good deal more than it intends. In fact, if any citizen, having filed his income tax return and paid the first installment on his right to live for the coming year, wants to know what the hell is becoming of the seven hundred millions a year being spent on the Navy, here is where he can find out, and without benefit of statistics. For Mr. Connolly's Navy is not an affair of tons, calibres, and high pressure boilers, but of individuals experiencing peculiar griefs and joys, which he is fortunately able to communicate to the reader.

The book is made up of nothing but small facts and incidents. By his very industry in assembling detail, by his very neglect of general ideas, Mr. Connolly has succeeded in putting into his book the true history of the Navy for the past forty years with something of the prospects for the future.

F. P.

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Double-Crostics: No. 264

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

					1-N	2-K	3-J	4-D		5-A		6-Q	7-B	8-V	9-L	10-W		
11-C	12-G		13-Y	14-J	15-E		16-X	17-U		18-O		19-G	20-B	21-W		22-Y	23-B	
24-V	25-P	26-L		27-G	28-U	29-T		30-A	31-M	32-O	33-S		34-Y	35-T	36-E	37-K		
38-L	39-I	40-T	41-X		42-F	43-P		44-T	45-F	46-J		47-G	48-F	49-Y		50-W	51-S	
52-Q	53-M	54-E	55-V	56-I		57-P		58-B	59-I	60-W	61-T		62-X	63-B	64-G		65-D	
66-Y	67-X		68-C	69-U		70-K	71-Q	72-G	73-O	74-S	75-N	76-W		77-E	78-S	79-N	80-F	
	81-E	82-Q	83-J	84-R	85-T		86-P	87-R		88-C	89-U	90-P	91-E		92-I	93-B	94-U	
95-H	96-D	97-R	98-T		99-J	100-W	101-H	102-U		103-B	104-F	105-J		106-V	107-A	108-Q	109-H	
110-L	111-I	112-P	113-F	114-J		115-G	116-K		117-T	118-S	119-B		120-W	121-J	122-S	123-D	124-H	
	125-O	126-N	127-G	128-D		129-D	130-Y	131-U		132-L	133-S	134-O	135-D	136-J		137-U	138-H	
	139-A		140-Q	141-C	142-W	143-M	144-A	145-B	146-H		147-V	148-Y	149-N	150-S		151-M	152-A	
153-Q	154-P		155-R	156-N	157-I	158-K	159-C	160-W	161-L	162-B		163-K	164-C		165-Y	166-H	167-E	
168-F	169-A	170-T	171-G	172-B		173-S	174-U		175-A	176-L		177-D	178-H	179-X	180-Q			

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 21 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Pertaining to a river's banks.

B. Full of preconceived notions.

C. In or to the "land of nod."

D. In a like manner.

E. Disposed to laugh.

F. Unimportant person or thing (comp.) (colloq.).

G. Incredible tale (2 wds.) (colloq.).

H. Exiles.

I. Remote future.

J. Rascal (colloq.).

K. Trifling amount (comp.) (colloq.).

L. Cycle of English Mystery Plays.

M. Aware of (slang).

N. Out-house (comp.).

O. Ascertain.

P. Novel by Fanny Burney (1778).

Q. Consummate.

R. Make harmonious.

S. Tending to radiate.

T. Creative, formative.

U. Practical wisdom.

V. Not seldom.

W. Rectified by removing errors (text).

X. Impressionist painter (1840-1926).

Y. Founder of famous scientific institute (last name).

WORDS

107	175	30	139	169	144	5	152				
20	58	7	119	103	93	145	63	23	172	162	
68	164	141	159	11	88						
123	96	128	65	177	129	135	4				
167	54	36	77	81	91	15					
45	48	42	113	168	80	104					
12	115	171	19	127	27	47	72	64			
124	101	138	166	146	178	95	109				
59	92	157	39	111	56						
46	3	136	121	105	83	14	99	114			
116	70	158	163	2	37						
9	110	26	132	176	161	38					
151	143	53	31								
1	75	149	156	79	126						
125	32	18	73	134							
154	25	112	90	86	43	57					
153	71	140	6	52	108	180	82				
87	155	84	97								
133	33	173	78	118	150	74	122	51			
40	29	61	170	35	98	85	44	117			
102	28	94	137	17	69	131	89	174			
24	106	147	8	55							
100	50	60	120	160	142	21	10	76			
62	16	179	41	67							
22	34	13	130	148	165	66	49				

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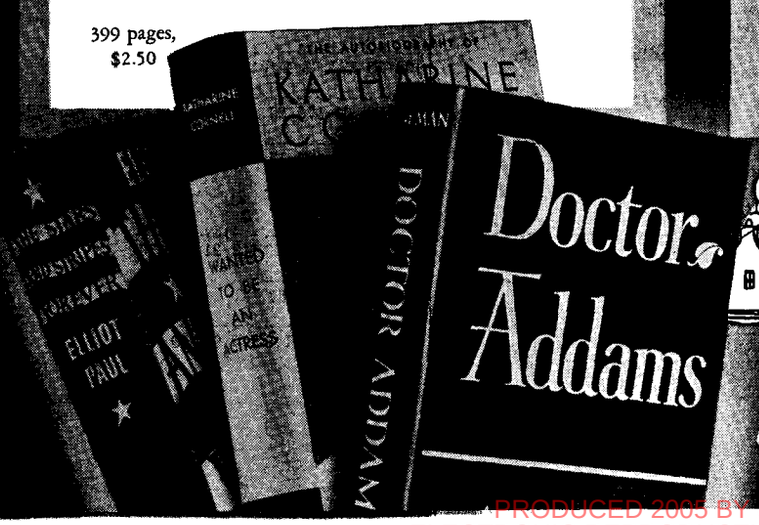

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